

17 Acorn Lane  
Bristol, CT 06010

March 3, 2016

Environment Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Committee Members:

I'm writing in support of House Bill number 5583. An Act Concerning An Agreement Regarding the Annual Water Level of Bashan Lake in the Town of East Haddam.

I'm a seasonal resident on Bashan Lake in East Haddam. In the 20 plus years that I've been on the lake, I've seen first hand how quickly **invasive** milfoil took over the cove that my house is on. We went from a small patch in front of my house to having the entire cove filled in less than 6 years.

So, when residents first learned in 2012 that the DEEP was planning a dam repair that would require lowering the lake by 18 feet, many people were thinking that this could be what was needed to eliminate the milfoil. But little did we know that the dam project would leave us with an even worse problem. Although we were originally told that the dam would be completed by February 1, 2015, the dam wasn't actually closed until June 1, 2015. By then the lake was still down 14 feet and the coves turned into wetland areas that became infested with a variety of wetland weeds, including cat tails and **invasive** phragmites.

Those 2 weeds are capable of growing in deeper water and grow tall above the water. On Lake Beseck those weeds have cut residents off from their docks and recreation areas. Cat tails spread through the coves like wild fire last summer and phragmites is an extremely aggressive **invasive** weed that if left unchecked will out perform the cat tails. So, as the water level rises and the cat tails and phragmites continue growing in deeper water there may be a need to lower the level of water in the lake by various amounts and during various times to ensure proper remediation.

We need to have the lake drawn down on an annual basis and we need a flexible approach to the water draw down. The water draw down will protect waterfront walls from being destroyed by ice damage and it will allow for continued remediation of **invasive** weeds.

Bashan Lake residents and members of the Bashan Lake Association (BLA) are passionate about our lake and have shown over the years what they're willing to do to ensure the proper care of this lake. The BLA is ready and willing to relay to the Town of East Haddam when and how much the lake should be lowered and they can be relied on to take that responsibility seriously.

Thank you for raising this bill and I strongly urge that you vote to pass it.

Sincerely,

Susan E. Deguzis